

WORLD INNOVATION SUMMIT FOR HEALTH ANNOUNCES AUTISM FORUM FOR 2016 CONFERENCE

Forum Will Examine Developments And Required Policy Changes In Coping With Autism

Doha, Qatar, 3 April 2016: The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) recently announced that an Autism Forum and report will be presented during its 2016 conference, which is taking place from 29th to 30th November in Doha, Qatar.

The forum will outline the opportunities and hurdles facing the struggles around autism today, spanning the most recent developments across various sectors, including education, medicine, and policymaking. Conference participants will be given detailed action plans and recommendations that will allow them to utilise those innovations, in turn adapting them to local contexts.

Dr Kerim Munir, Director of the Center for Autism and Related Disorders at Boston Children's Hospital and Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, will chair the forum. He said: "The Autism Forum will present a global framework for action through evidence-based policy innovation, and promote the adoption of effective health and education interventions that emphasise inclusionary and family-oriented care."

"We will outline the opportunities and challenges in addressing autism and related developmental disorders through health and education interventions across different areas, including knowledge, training, services and support, and policy. We will also describe actions for policy makers to harness innovations and adapt successful policies to the local context," he added.

The Autism Forum will provide case studies and diagrams outlining actions that must be taken across the health, education, and social sectors involved in addressing the condition. Raising awareness and enhancing knowledge of the condition by understanding the cultural needs and barriers to best practices, for example, will facilitate treatment and the development of educational curricula.

Egbert Schillings, CEO of WISH, remarked: "Autism is a big, messy, complicated subject, especially when you factor in the panic that's been unleashed by the spread of false notions of a link between the condition and childhood vaccines. While those debates continue to rage in certain circles, those affected are dealing with a completely different set of problems, which is that there are not enough services and resources for autistic people and their families. The WISH Forum Report will outline concrete actions for policy makers to harness innovations in

the field and adapt effective policies to their local context, so that individuals with autism and their families can get the support they need.”

The report will recommend that interdisciplinary training spans sectors, with providers, teachers, and families working together to ensure best treatment for the individual at the earliest stages possible. In the home, modifications can be made with respect to services offered and equipment requested, along with counselling and education. It will underscore the importance of financing research, services to provide training, universal health-coverage options, and the evaluation of outcomes. In the education sector, finance for infrastructure and the curation of curricula will be discussed in detail.

Dr Munir will be accompanied by leading scholars and doctors in the field, including Dr Muhammad Waqar Azeem, an inaugural Chair of Psychiatry for Sidra Medical and Research Center, as well as research lead David Helm, Director of the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities at the Institute for Community Inclusion at Boston Children's Hospital and the University of Massachusetts Boston.

The WISH 2016 Summit will feature seven groundbreaking research forums that highlight and address some of the world's most pressing healthcare challenges. In addition to Autism, the forums will generate interdisciplinary, evidence-based reports on topics including Healthy Populations, Precision Medicine, Economic Benefits of Investing in Health, Cardiovascular Disease, Accountable Care, and Behavioural Insights. Internationally-renowned experts will chair the forums. For the first time, WISH will also report on its ongoing impact locally and globally on issues previously highlighted at the summit, such as diabetes and patient safety.

The summit will feature innovation showcases from around the world that are shaping the design, delivery, and financing of care, as well as a cohort of young innovators; emerging healthcare leaders under the age of 30, whose contributions to global health deserve wider recognition.

WISH, a global initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), has evolved into a key platform for the dissemination of healthcare innovation and best practices. It is aligned with QF's mission to reinforce Qatar's pioneering role as an emerging centre for healthcare innovation.

For further information about WISH, please visit www.wish-qatar.org and Twitter [@WISHQatar](https://twitter.com/WISHQatar).

Image Captions

Image 1: Dr Kerim Munir, Director of the Center for Autism and Related Disorders at Boston Children's Hospital and Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, will chair the Autism Forum.

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About the World Innovation Summit for Health

The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) is a global healthcare community dedicated to capturing and disseminating the best evidence-based ideas and practices. WISH is an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) and is under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, its Chairperson.

The inaugural WISH Summit took place in Doha in 2013 and convened more than 1,000 global healthcare leaders. Through international summits and a range of on-going initiatives, WISH is creating a global community of leading innovators in healthcare policy, research and industry.

Together, they are harnessing the power of innovation to overcome the world's most urgent healthcare challenges and inspire other stakeholders to action.

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Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development is a private, non-profit organisation that is supporting Qatar on its journey from a carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir of Qatar, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF carries out its mission through three strategic pillars: education, science and research, and community development. QF's education pillar brings world-class universities to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. Meanwhile, its science and research pillar builds Qatar's innovation



and technology capacity by developing and commercialising solutions through key sciences. Finally, its community development pillar helps foster a progressive society while also enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>